

The President's Daily Brief

2 November 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

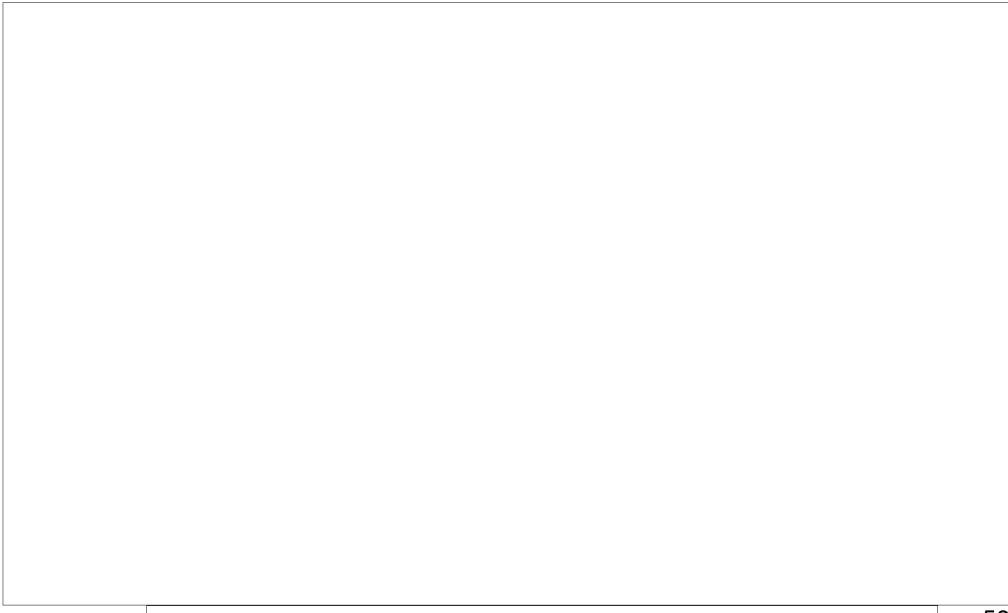
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There is heavy fighting in Cambodia. (Page 2)

Communist China expects to occupy its seat in the
UN by the end of the week. (Page 3)

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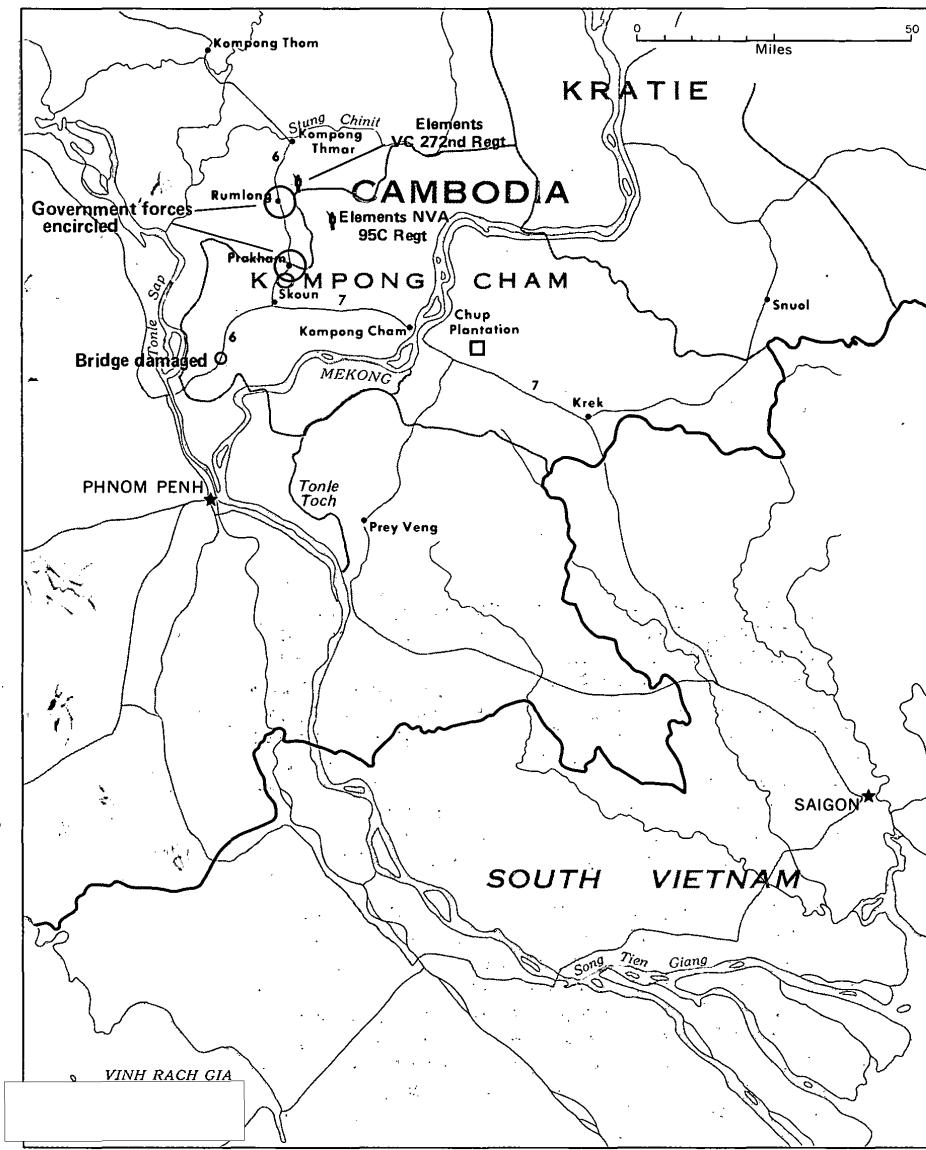
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CAMBODIA

Four government battalions, accompanied by armored vehicles, are moving up Route 6 from Skoun in an attempt to relieve eight other battalions that have been encircled between the villages of Prakham and Rumlong. At the same time, several Khmer Krom battalions from Kompong Thmar have moved down the highway to within a mile of Rumlong, which has been the object of some of the Communists' sharpest attacks. Altogether the government now has 39 battalions, or about 20,000 men, assigned to the Chenla II task force strung out between Skoun and Kompong Thmar town.

There is evidence that the Communists have committed additional numbers of their best troops to the Route 6 operation--a further sign that their dry season offensive has begun. In the past week, elements of two regiments--the 95C and the 272nd--of the Communist 9th Division have crossed west of the Mekong River to within easy striking distance of Route 6.

There are several possible explanations for these attacks along Route 6. With better weather approaching, the Communists may want to re-establish their control over the highway to facilitate the movement of supplies to the west. They may also want to undermine Phnom Penh's morale by inflicting some sharp setbacks to what has been the government's best-run military operation. It is also possible that the Communists are seeking to forestall any government plans for operations against their important bases and supply points east of Route 6 or into Kompong Cham or Kratie provinces.

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NOTE

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Communist China - UN: Peking's delegation to
the UN is expected to depart today, arriving in New
York on 5 or 6 November

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The group is to be headed by acting Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei, whose presence would be a measure of the great importance Peking assigns to the symbolic act of occupying its seat in the UN. The prompt departure of the delegation would suggest that the Communist Chinese have concluded the Nationalists have little chance of retaining their places in specialized UN agencies. Taipei's acting Foreign Minister, however, told Ambassador McConaughy yesterday that his government intends to make a strong fight to remain in the specialized agencies.

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